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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADDED ADDRESSEE-LONDON)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/28/2012  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NI](#) [LI](#)  
SUBJECT: OBASANJO TAYLOR MEETING CONFIRMED

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOHN CAMPBELL FOR REASONS 1.4 A, B, and D

11. (C) Summary. Ambassador on Feb. 28 in Abuja asked Nigerian presidential spokesman Femi Fani Kayode about reports the President Met with Charles Taylor on February 26. The Ambassador said the USG wanted Taylor brought to justice and noted Obasanjo's repeated statements that Nigeria would extradite Taylor if requested by a democratically elected Government of Liberia. Kayode said he believed the meeting did take place and said Nigeria would respond favorably if Liberia requested Taylor be turned over. Economic officer spoke with Cross River State Governor Donald Duke, who confirmed that Obasanjo, Taylor, and Duke met Feb. 26 in Lagos at Taylor's request. Duke said the former Liberian president wanted to learn whether Taylor could continue to reside in his current housing in Calabar and that Obasanjo said "yes." End summary.

12. (C) Ambassador met Feb. 28 in Abuja with Nigerian presidential spokesman Femi Fani Kayode and asked about whether press reports about a brief meeting on Feb. 26 with former Liberian President Taylor were correct. Kayode confirmed the meeting, but caveated that he had not spoken to President Obasanjo about it directly.

13. (C) The Ambassador said the USG wanted Charles Taylor brought to justice. He noted President Obasanjo's repeated statements that Nigeria would honor a request for extradition from the head of a democratically elected Government of Liberia, and that new Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was coming to Nigeria this weekend. Kayode said Taylor still lived under tight controls in Calabar. And that most importantly, there were firm Government of Nigeria (GON) limits on Taylor's involvement with Liberia, well understood by Taylor. Taylor could travel from Calabar only when taken or escorted by the Cross Rivers Governor Duke.

14. (C) Kayode said the ball was in Johnson-Sirleaf's court. Nigeria would respond favorably if Liberia requested Taylor be turned over. Nigeria was bound to live up to its promise.

15. (C) Economic officer spoke with Cross River State Governor Donald Duke on Feb. 28, shortly after Duke returned to Calabar from Lagos. Duke confirmed that Taylor, Obasanjo, and he had met Feb. 26 at Murtala Muhammed International Airport in Lagos. The governor said he was Taylor's "host" and implied Duke attended only in this capacity. Duke said the meeting was held at Taylor's request, and that the former Liberian president sought to "try to sort himself out locally." He said Taylor specifically wanted to learn from Obasanjo whether Taylor could plan to continue residing in his current housing in Calabar. According to Duke, Obasanjo replied "yes." The Nigerian press reported Feb. 27 that Taylor arrived at Lagos airport in a Nigerian presidential aircraft, that Taylor's talks with Obasanjo lasted only 30 minutes, and that Taylor and Duke were to return together to

Calabar.  
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